



Loudoun County
Department of Fire, Rescue, and Emergency
Management
INFORMATIONAL BULLETIN



Subject: 800 Mhz Radio System Update

Date of Issue: December 7, 2009

Informational Bulletin: LCFR Informational Bulletin 2009-051

Approved: _____

Joseph E. Pozzo, Chief of Department

As outlined in IB 2009-039, the new 800 MHz radio system will “go live” at 0600 hours on December 15, 2009. At that time, personnel will place the new APX7000 portable radios in service and switch the operating zone on the mobile radios.

There are a number of important items personnel should be aware of:

1. The primary operational zone for the APX7000 portable radios is Zone 60.
2. The primary operational zone for the mobile radios is Zone 6P.
3. The low band paging and simulcasting system will continue to operate normally.
4. To consult with medical control, personnel must switch to Zone 69 and select the appropriate hospital.
 - a. Lansdowne = Zone 69-Charlie
 - b. Cornwall = Zone 69-Delta
 - c. Reston = Zone 69-Echo
 - d. Fair Oaks = Zone 69-Foxtrot
5. Scan Function

End users can select up to 10 different talkgroups within the Loudoun zones to scan, including the non-repeated channels November and Oscar. The radios are not programmed to “priority” scan. This means that the radios will not continuously monitor and revert back to a set talkgroup. Personnel should not use the scan function during incident operations or while operating off a portable as they may miss important radio traffic.

6. Emergency Activation (EA) “Open Mic”

The new system has been programmed with the open microphone feature. This feature automatically opens the microphone and transmits on the current talkgroup for 10 seconds after the EA button has been depressed.

7. Batteries

The APX7000 radios use IMPRES batteries, which must be maintained and conditioned according to a set schedule to achieve maximum performance and battery life. The gang chargers automatically determine whether a battery requires charging or conditioning and responds accordingly. These batteries are not compatible with the existing vehicle chargers. It is imperative that personnel do not attempt to charge the APX7000 portables in a vehicle charger. Over the next several months, staff will be removing the vehicle chargers and replacing them with mounting brackets.

- a. To ensure that the batteries are maintained properly, personnel must change their batteries at the beginning of every shift. Station Commanders/Worksite Supervisors should develop a plan to rotate batteries through reserve and/or specialty apparatus regularly – at least weekly, but more frequently will not harm the batteries.

8. Accessories

- a. Radio Holsters – The County will not be purchasing leather radio holsters. Each portable radio will be issued with a nylon case or a plastic belt clip. Personnel may purchase leather radio holsters through a third party vendor such as www.powercallsirens.com or www.radiotech.com.
- b. Remote Speaker Microphones (aka “lapel” microphones) – Each portable radio will be issued with an IP57 rated Remote Speaker Microphone (RSM). The IP57 rating means that the RSM is submersible, dust-resistant, particulate-resistant, and wind-canceling. The RSMs are equipped with an Emergency Activation button, volume reduction switch, and a programmable button on the side.
 - The EA button is active.
 - The volume reduction switch is active and will reduce the volume by a set level without the user adjusting the volume knob.
 - The programmable button is not active, but will illuminate the display screens.
- c. All existing radio accessories, such as earpieces, surveillance microphones, bone microphones, holsters, and special system adapters are not compatible with the new radios and will not function. The County intends to make a single bulk order of these accessories after January 1, 2010. Additional information on how to request and order such items will be forthcoming. **NOTE:** this does not include in-vehicle headsets (e.g., David Clark, FireComm, etc.). These headsets will continue to operate normally.

9. Non-Repeated Channels

The new radio system has been programmed with two conventional, non-repeated channels (November and Oscar). Oscar will remain the primary safety channel for working incidents. Personnel may use November during training, inspections, etc. or if a second safety channel is required.